

Homework

Tracking

<input type="checkbox"/> Food & activity records online (myfitnesspal)	<input type="checkbox"/> Meditation practice _____ days this week
<input type="checkbox"/> Food, activity & mood journal (paper)	<input type="checkbox"/> Journal 3 pages _____ mornings this week
<input type="checkbox"/> Specific food or eating behavior goal: _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Specific action related to support system: _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Specific activity /fun goal: _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Relaxation practice _____ days this week
<input type="checkbox"/> _____	<input type="checkbox"/> _____
<input type="checkbox"/> _____	<input type="checkbox"/> _____

Notes

Developing and Maintaining Social Support

What is social support and why is it important to maintaining a healthy lifestyle?

- It is the emotional support and encouragement from family, friends, informal groups, and co-workers, etc. It can be helpful advice at difficult times, or just knowing that you can go to someone for help or support if you need to. It's working together as a family to become healthier, rather than expecting one person to change in isolation.
- Social support can help protect you against illness and can help you deal better with medical problems. Research shows that people without any social support tend to have higher rates of many chronic diseases such as arthritis, cancer, and heart disease.
- Family ties, friendships, and involvement in social activities can also act as a buffer against stress, depression, and anxiety.
- Social support helps people deal with stress.

Developing and Maintaining Support

- Social support is an important ingredient in the behavior change process.
- You are more likely to be successful if your family, friends, and co-workers are supportive than if they actively oppose, or are indifferent to your efforts toward change.
- Social support can occur in many forms.
 - It may be nothing more than encouragement and reinforcement of your attempts to maintain your healthy eating and exercise habits.

How can you increase the amount of support you receive?

You can generate positive support by planning and following some specific steps:

- 1) Define the type of support you need. Would you like an exercise partner or just someone to reinforce you for exercising and eating healthy? Do you have people who “police” your food intake? If so, is this helpful or harmful?
- 2) Figure out which individuals (family, friends, or co-workers) in your social network can provide support and discuss your dietary, physical activity, and weight management goals with these individuals.
- 3) Of those individuals you believe could support your efforts, figure out how each of them can specifically assist you and inform them of this. Try not to be shy about asking for help and/or angry if someone declines your request for help. Also let people know if they are doing or saying anything that is unhelpful or may result in sabotage.
- 4) Remember to find ways of expressing your appreciation and reinforcing people who are supporting you. This will increase the likelihood these individuals will continue to support you in the future.
- 5) Have conversations with unsupportive family members about ways in which they could become more supportive. Try to use an assertive, but not aggressive, communication style. If they are unwilling to help, discuss ideas for compromise.

My Support System

Families and friends can be a great source of support in weight loss and health improvement efforts. However, there can also be many challenges that arise within our support systems when trying to make lifestyle changes. We'll discuss strategies for communicating your support needs later, but first take some time to identify which areas are working well and which need some improvement. We will focus on completing the third column later.

Ways that my support system helps me	Ways that my support system gets in the way	What can I do to address this?
Takes over childcare so that I can come to group	Continues to bring home foods that I am trying to limit	

Responding to Food Pushers and the Food Police

Does anyone in your life try to support you with statements like these?

“Are you supposed to be eating that? Aren’t you on a diet?”

“Slow down, you’re eating too fast!”

“Do you really need a second serving of that?”

“You’re diabetic, you shouldn’t be eating sweets.”

Often, these types of comments are meant to be supportive, but they don’t tend to be helpful and can actually backfire, leading to “spiteful eating,” “secretive eating”, or resentment.

***How can you respond to the “food police” so that these comments stop happening or no longer impact how you feel?**

How do you speak to yourself about your challenges?

“I can’t believe I did that.”

“I’m never going to be successful.”

“I blew it. I might as well give up.”

How would it feel if someone else said these statements to you after you had a challenging day around your food choices or physical activity? What would you feel like doing (or not doing) after hearing this feedback? Why, then do we do this over and over again to ourselves?

***How can you talk back to negative self-talk and have a different outcome?**

Most Food Pushers fall into one of three categories:

- People who are deliberately trying to get you to eat something that they know you have been working hard to cut back on.
- People who are trying to be nice and don’t care whether or not you eat what they have offered.
- People who genuinely want you to eat something and are offended when you turn them down.

Remember, you are entitled to make good food decisions for yourself. Is it reasonable for them to be disappointed? What’s the worst that could happen by you turning down their offer?

***How can you respond to people when you feel pressured to eat something that you don’t want to eat?**

Organize your Environment for Success

Eating Cues

Which factors make you want to eat?

- Seeing or smelling food
- TV or other activities that make you think about food
- What other people say or do
- Social events
- Being nagged by the “food police”

Visualize your **home environment**. Which problem food cues do you see in the kitchen (sweets, convenience foods, chips/snack foods, candy, ice cream, food cooking, leftovers, etc.), dining room (e.g., leftovers, large plates, serving dishes on the table), living room (TV, telephone, computer, candy dish, etc.)?

Visualize your **work day**. Which problem food cues do you see on the way to work (e.g., Bakery, fast food on the way to work)? How about in the office (e.g., candy dish, pot lucks, donuts, vending machines)? Cafeteria (e.g., fried foods, desserts, etc.)?

Tips:

- 1) Do a pantry inventory. Keep “trigger” (or overly-stimulating) foods out of your house and work place.** Keep foods out of sight if you’re unable to remove them entirely. Talk with your family and coworkers (if applicable).
- 2) Keep healthy food options readily available, in reach, in sight, and ready to go.** Make the healthy choice the easy choice.
- 3) Limit your eating to one place (not in front of the TV). Limit other activities while you eat (avoid multi-tasking).**

- 4) Pay attention to the relationship between your emotions, hunger, and cravings.** Example: Rewarding yourself after a stressful day at work by pulling over for fast food.
- 5) Communicate with your family or support system about how they can support you.** Example: Praise you for your efforts and encourage you when you're struggling.
- 6) Build a new, healthier habit. Stay away from the food cue, change it, or practice responding to it in a different way.**
- 7) Plan ahead.**

Physical Activity Cues

Which factors increase the likelihood that you will be active?

- Keeping walking shoes, gym bag, inspirational photograph or reminder, bike, mat, exercise bands, or balls in sight
- Scheduling regular “physical activity dates” with friends or family members
- Talking with a coworker about being active together on breaks
- Setting an alarm as a reminder to be active
- Setting limits on TV /computer time
- Using a pedometer or other tracking device
- Scheduling physical activity into your routine, like an appointment
- Spend time with other people who are active
- Encouragement from friends or family

Responding to cues in the same way over and over again creates a habit.

Communicating Effectively with Support People Using “I” Statements

When you're upset about something, it can be difficult to express your thoughts and feelings effectively with your family or close friends. Sometimes it's not about the message, but more about the presentation (it's not WHAT you say, but the WAY that you say it...does this sound familiar?).

Here is a helpful strategy for communicating effectively with your family or friends.

Stay focused on yourself and use “I” Statements

“YOU” statements	“I” Statements
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• You make me so angry...• You need to stop telling me what I can and can't eat • You're not listening....• You're not helping enough• You're making this really hard for me	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• It's hurtful to me when you...• I appreciate that you're trying to support me and want me to be successful, but when you comment on what I'm eating it makes me feel..... • I don't think you understand....• I would like your help doing.....• I really struggle when potato chips are put right in front of me

Examples from your own life:

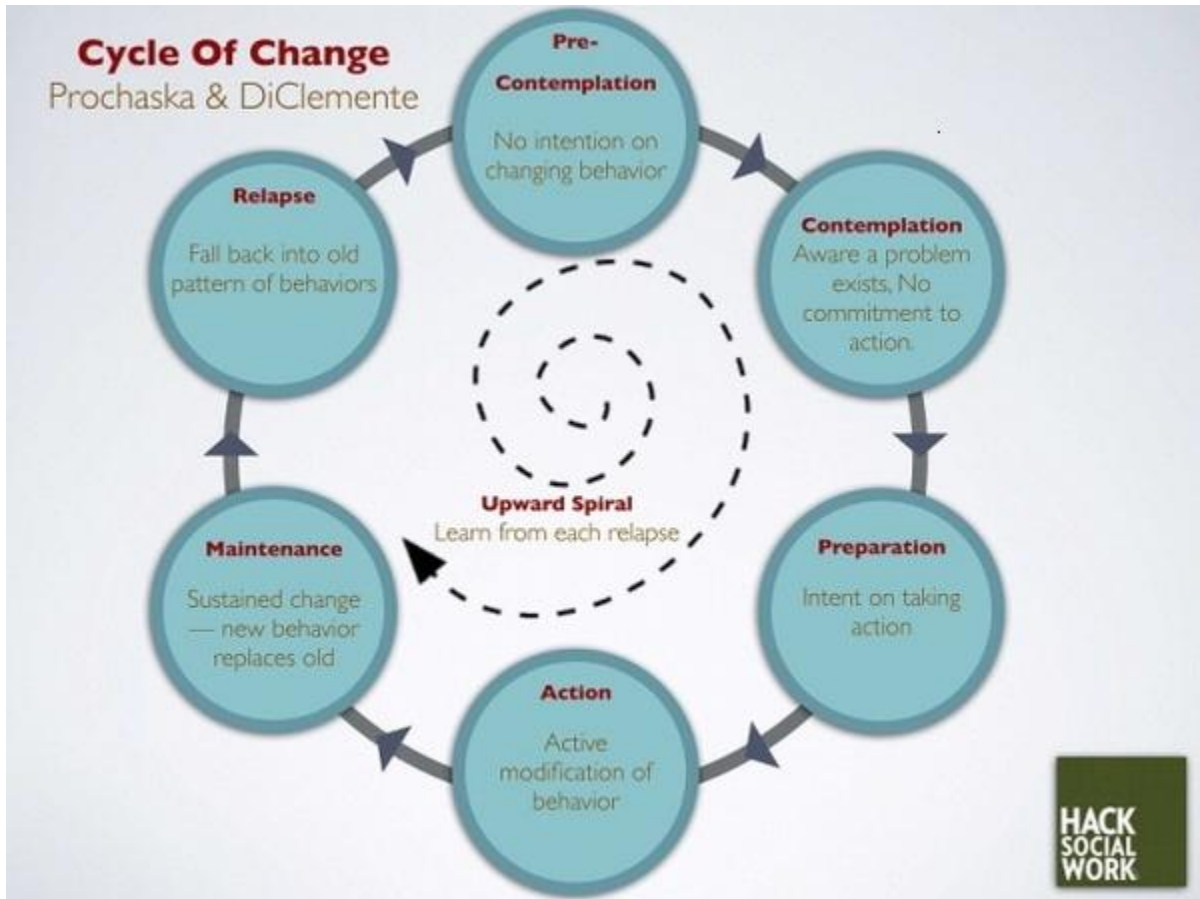
“You”

Statement: _____

Rewrite to be an “I”

Statement: _____

STAGES OF CHANGE



STAGES OF CHANGE

We can be in different stages of change for different issues
We can move back and forth between the stages with the same behavior at any time
Different interventions are used within each stage of change

Pre-contemplative:

- The person is unaware that there is an issue that they might benefit from working on
- If there is a problem in their life, it is because someone else has a problem that they need to fix
- The intervention at this stage is trying to raise the person's awareness

Contemplative:

- The person is aware that there is an issue that they might benefit from addressing, but they are not sure that they are willing to pay the price that they think they might have to pay to make the change
- The work in this stage is contemplating what life will be like if they continue on the same course vs. what it might be like if they make the change
- It's still too soon to ask someone to make changes asking them to make changes now will be met with resistance

Preparation:

- The person has decided that they want to make the change, but they need to get "their ducks in a row" before they are ready to act
- The intervention is pointing them toward resources that they need to start making changes
- Still too soon to start making changes

Action:

- Now they are ready to start making changes
- They become increasingly consistent in following through on implementing the changes that they want to make
- Skills and confidence in their ability to make and maintain the changes is increasing

Maintenance:

- The person has maintained the changes that they wanted to make for at least six months and there is good chance that they are going to be able to independently maintain the change
- The person will experience lapses, but they are able to quickly get back on track

Relapse:

- The person has reverted to an old behavior
- The work here is helping the person find the motivation to get back on track, identify triggers that led to the relapse, and learn from the experience in order to reduce the likelihood of getting caught in the same trap again